Jesus is evidently thinking that they are going to get the wrong idea and that he had better try and explain to them very quickly that it's part of God's plan that the Messiah should suffer and die. But Peter can not see that: it does not fit in with his notion of the Messiah's role at all. Jesus has to get quite aggressive with him and call him "Satan". Already Jesus has got a problem with his "image", and explains that, against their expectations, the Son of Man, far from being a triumphant emperor or king, in fact must suffer if God's plan of salvation is to be fulfilled. The conventional Jewish idea of a Messiah, shared by Peter, was based on Old Testament passages like those in *Isaiah* 9 and 11. He was to set up a kingdom on earth, defeat his enemies and bring in a time of peace. Jesus's idea of a Messiah was very different. It was based on the idea of the "The Suffering Servant" in *Isaiah* (50:4 ff.; 52:13-53:12) and the *Psalms* (22; 69; 118. See also *Zechariah* 13:7). Mark takes the opportunity of the first prophecy of death to introduce some teaching about the meaning of suffering: the more you try to protect your own interests the more likely you are to waste our lives; the more sacrifice we make, the more we get close to what life is all about. This is a very hard teaching, and makes Christian discipleship very difficult to accept by anyone not brought up to it - a rather frightening way of life if you take it literally.

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